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23 March 1954 (Revised)

DRAFT MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Proposed NIE on Soviet Capabilities in the Field of Guided Missiles

1. In the view of the Board, a thorough-going estimate as to Soviet capabilities in the guided missiles field falls in the area of national, rather than departmental, intelligence, and should be undertaken by the IAC rather than by the JIC or one of its sub-committees on technical matters. The reasons:

- a. The kind of estimate required must rest on several fields of knowledge other than the purely technical;
- b. The estimate will not be worth the effort unless Soviet scientific and technical competence in the missiles field is balanced against Soviet capability in other means of delivery, unless the probable missile effort is weighed against probable global strategy and its timing, and unless the economics of missiles development, particularly the capabilities of the Soviet electronics industry, is equated with competing items in the Soviet defense budget.

2. Probable Soviet future capabilities in the field of guided missiles are of primary importance to the entire national security program. Assumed or estimated Soviet capabilities in this field will have an impact on the planning of each department of government involved in US security measures. A particularly important aspect

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may be planning

to be explored is whether or not the USSR ~~plans~~^A to skip the long-range bomber stage in the evolution of the system for the delivery of intercontinental weapons. The estimate should therefore be as broadly based as possible, both as to its scope and as to the number of intelligence agencies participating in its preparation.

3. This estimate has been requested by the Federal Civil Defense Administrator (See IAC-D-81). The problem posed is vital to the entire FCDA program, and to the much greater problem of continental defense. Hence nothing but the best attempt of the intelligence community at large to meet as many of his requirements as possible will satisfy him.

4. Given the importance of this subject each agency having a responsibility in this field has made and will continue to make its own estimate. It is important that these various and often differing estimates be coordinated for ~~the~~ use at the national level.

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